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the Lord Buddha, and some fell away into lamentable heresies. Many of them still retain reminiscences of the teachings of the Great Master. Thus the Bible of the Christian contains moral precepts in a great measure identical with the sentiments conveyed in the thoughts or sermons of the Lord Buddha. There is even confirmation in the mention of the ages of Methuselah and other men of old, of the doctrine of the waxing and waning term of human life. Some learned Sadaws have held that the Lord Jesus is Dewadat, the cousin of Shin Gautama, who was always trying to overthrow the good works of the Buddha; and it is well known that the Siamese speak of the evil Dewadat as the God of Europe, and the causer of all the evil in the world. This opinion is not, however, generally held, and the best thing a Burman can wish for a good Englishman is that in some future existence, as a reward of good works, he may be born a Buddhist and if possible a Burman. For that the Burmese are most nearly descended
● [103] from the original holy people, their name Byammā or Bamā evidently shows, while no other nation preserves the sacred law more carefully and more exactly in its form as it came from the lips of the Lord Buddha himself. Moreover, the Burmese monarchs retained the titles given to Mahāthamada, the first king, and his immediate successors, and therefore they ranked above all others.

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778 were still a good number of the tame fish, tame enough to allow you to stroke them and put gold-leaf on their heads, but there were far from being as many as there should have been had the villagers duly observed the teachings of the [177-77] Buddha. The primeval simplicity of the people is fast fading away throughout the province. The travelling Englishman finds no difficulty in either getting people to sell fowls, or others still less hampered by doubts, to wring their necks and cook them.

792 105 The monastery sometimes has a name of its own; more frequently it is called by the Pali name of the town or pagoda near which it lies, or by that of its prior. The Thayet-daw Kyaung in Rangoon is so called from the magnificent mango-trees that grow within it. Well known in Upper Burma is the monastery of U Sandimā, or the Mingala-san Taik, where King Mindôn received his instruction in the religious texts which he knew so well. The name is usually given by the founder after consultation with the proposed head of the community, and it cannot be said that the consultation results in much originality.

792 Here and there throughout the country there are a few yatheit, hermits who withdraw into solitude in forests and desert places, and, like the old rathi (from which word of course the Burman term is derived), they live on wild fruits and roots and the chance alms of passers-by. But as the rathi were closely connected with the Brahmins, and as the custom is not recommended by the Buddha, nor looked upon with favour by the people, it is not of frequent occurrence. Occasionally a very austere monk buries himself in the solitude of the jungle during the season of Lent, in order the better to devote himself to meditation, but even this is not common. Nevertheless in the rocks above Nyaung-u, near Pagān, there are a few cells dug out high up in the cliffs which are always occupied, as any one who has gone out to shoot the rock pigeons which abound there will very speedily find. The yatheit comes down, confiscates the bag, and drives away the sportsman with terrible threats of future punishment. Such caves and holes in the rocks are not uncommon on other parts of the Irrawaddy, wherever the ascetic is able to climb up and finds the stratum soft enough to hack

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There's many a goodly image
In Mahā Myat-muni,
But Mamyay[1] shall be aged
Ere it a fairer see. 539

And I, the poor Inspector,
May lay me down in peace,
For when this life is ended
Existences shall cease.

It is a very usual practice at the casting of bells and images for the onlookers to throw gold and silver articles of jewellery into the ladles of melted ore. 778 325

[1] Mamyay is a common poetical contraction for Mandalay. Man is also frequently used. [103]

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A woman who has seven sons or seven daughters in unbroken succession is almost certain to become a witch; her husband had better not quarrel with her at any rate.

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At Kāma, a small place between Prome and Thayetmyo, there is a spirit flame, a kind of Jack o' Lantern, in a hollow near the town. Long ago a smith was killed in a brawl and became a nat after death. He liked his old profession and set up a nat-fire, and worked away at nights on a spectral forge. The inhabitants soon found out what was going on, and after their first terror was over used to go out in the middle of the day and leave a piece of iron, saying, "Good Mr. Spirit, make me an axe, a dah, a hoe." Next day they found it all ready made. At last a Chin—just the sort of thing one of those stupid people would do—hid himself, and just when the midnight cocks had finished crowing, up rose the smith in human shape, dressed in a red paso and a flaring red turban. He began hammering away on his anvil, welding a sword. The infatuated Chin at last shouted, "Make it quick." The demon smith whipped round on the instant and flung the red-hot dah at him, burning his cheek. The indiscreet peeping Tom took to his heels and ran. After he had got a mile away he rubbed his blistered cheek, and in after-times there rose at that place Pāpôt, "the cheek-rubbing village." A mile farther on he began to shake all over with fatigue and terror, whence the name of Tôn, "the trembling village." Finally, when he reached the site of Paukpogu, the "swelling burst," he sank down on the ground, and was found there next morning with just enough life left to tell his story. The smith never worked again, but his fire may be seen to this day. Once a year all the house fires in Kāma are put out and lighted again from the nat-mi. Should any one neglect so to pay hônour to the nat, his house and all his goods will be burnt before the year is out. The resemblance to the legend of Wayland Smith at Lambourn in Berkshire is obvious. The naming of the villages is also a favourite form of Horne Took etymology prevalent all over Burma.

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The common notion of earthquakes is that the earth is supported on the shoulders of four creatures called nga-hlyin. These monsters are less sturdy than the classical Atlas, and